

Report on Participation in Thailand Field Research Trip

Lu Wanxue

Year level: Doctor 1

Faculty/Graduate School of Asian and African area study

Kyoto University

During the Thailand Field Research Trip, we had a great opportunity to attend many enlightening lectures in Thammasat University. One of the most impressive lectures is given by Professor Dr. Thanet Aphornsuvan who is an expert in the area of society and culture in Thailand. Professor Dr. Thanet talked a lot about the relationship among different classes and the power shift in the prewar Thai society to help us get a better understanding about the tradition and custom of Thai people. From the coup plots happened in the Thai history, I am able to get the idea of Professor Dr. Thanet that to some extent, the dispute between “Red Shirts” and “Yellow Shirts” in the modern Thai society can be explained from a perspective of the Thai coup plot history and the natural character of Thai people. For example, student uprising movement happened in 1970s.

Besides the lectures, we went to the Temple of Emerald Buddha and Grand Palace. The splendid Buddhist architecture and the profound culture of Buddhism enlightened me a lot. To understand a nation, we have to look at different aspects of their society. For Thai studies, it's important to comprehend the Buddhism doctrine. I had also enriched my experience by the trip to Ayuthaya Province. The centuries-old architecture there silently told the glorious history of this ancient capital city. On the way to Ayuthaya Province, the rural scenery and the tropical plants impresses me a lot.

We have learned a lot about the retail market and industry facilities through the visit tour to AEON Thailand (Maxvalu Supermarket), Nong Khae Industrial Estate and Processed Chicken Meat Factory of Charoen Pokphand Foods (CPF). We also visited to the organic goat farm and pineapple, rubber pilot farm in Phuket to observe the local agriculture business. Through this trip, I noticed that sometimes, especially abroad we have to be more open for different ideas in order to get a better mutual understand.

In Phuket, we had an opportunity to visit the Non-Governmental Organization. They try to improve the local environment together with the local community. They introduced many advanced garbage disposal methods from abroad. They also make a contract with the local hotel and hospital to help them deal with the trash environmentally. The idea to carry forward the basic understand of the importance of environment to the local community help them develop very fast.

Through this trip, I had met many friendly students and excellent professors in Thammasat University. Since I am doing Thai commercial bank studies and aim to become a researcher, the lectures by Professor Dr. Thanet and other professors enlightened me a lot and helped me have a deeper understand about the political economy in Thailand. Therefore, I planned to go for a long-term field research trip in Thailand next year with the help of professors in Thammasat University. I appreciate a lot to have the opportunity to take part in this program so that I can have a good experience in Thailand.